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But we did not intend to moralize over Mr. Buckingham's entertaining volumes; we wished simply to commend them to our readers' attention and regard. They contain much information on topics in which every one feels some interest, which would be sought in vain elsewhere, or could be obtained only after long and exhausting research. The specimens of newspaper literature are selected with excellent taste and judgment, and many of them deserve to be laid away in cedar among the few books to which a cultivated appetite often recurs without any risk of satiety. Joseph Dennie was one of the most pure, tasteful, and elegant writers of whom our trans-Atlantic literature can boast; his *Lay Sermons* were never preached to a sleepy audience, and if collected and republished at the present day, would have a glad reception from many besides those who would be interested in them from associations with the past. Our author's own style is an honorable exception to the slipshod manner in which most newspaper writers of our own day generally indulge. He writes English with the vigor, precision, and neatness, which show that vigilant self-discipline and long practice may produce all the best effects of careful training in the schools. We hope the intimation given in the preface, that a third volume may perhaps appear, "embracing matters of more recent date, and which excited some interest at the time of their occurrence," will ere long be fulfilled.

2. *English Grammar. The English Language in its Elements and Forms, with a History of its Origin and Development; designed for Use in Colleges and Schools.* By WILLIAM C. FOWLER, late Professor of Rhetoric in Amherst College. New York: Harper and Brothers. 1850. Svo. pp. 675.

THOUGH class-books for instruction have multiplied of late years with great rapidity, some striking deficiencies in the list yet remain; and among these, we know not a more obvious and pressing one than that which Professor Fowler has here attempted to supply. Murray's larger grammar, and the excellent little work by Bishop Lowth, on which it is founded, rather indicate the want than satisfy it; they are neither comprehensive in plan, nor satisfactory in execution. That they are not methodical or systematic in form, is a fault which ought in fairness to be attributed to the subject. Our noble mother tongue, with all its copiousness,

flexibility, and power, is an immethodical and anomalous compound of heterogeneous ingredients. A great part of its beauty is attributable to its irregularity ; its richness often proceeds from its violations of rule. It is like an old-fashioned mansion-house, which has undergone so many alterations and additions, to suit the taste and the convenience of its successive owners, that it has become a shapeless pile when viewed from without, and within, it is a ~~māze~~ ^{maze} of turnings, passages, staircases, and odd corners ; but it is still grand, spacious, and comfortable, with massive walls, stout buttresses, and noble apartments. An army might encamp under its roof, and treasures are hidden in its chambers. To describe it in terms which would be intelligible to one who has never wandered through its spacious halls, to classify its rooms, its entrances, and its conveniences, to give a technical name to every nook and passage, and point out a purpose for every feature in its architecture, would be a vain attempt. We can know it thoroughly only by dwelling in it for many years.

The grammarian who makes the English language his subject has an arduous task ; and we ought therefore to view his work with leniency. The instructor who attempts to teach English grammar without the light which is reflected upon it from the grammatical systems of other languages, has to contend with still greater difficulties ; and we wonder how his pupils learn it at all. With these preliminary considerations kept fully in view, we are prepared to judge Professor Fowler's treatise fairly. It contains much good material ; it bears the marks of laborious research and careful elaboration. A good portion of it may be used in the higher seminaries with advantage, and the laborious student will derive profit from diligent study of the whole. We have not had time to examine it thoroughly ; but it appears to be a safe guide, as far as it goes. The author is not ambitious of novelty, nor is he a slave to a preconceived theory. He does not stretch the language upon the Procrustes bed of a grammatical system, but contents himself with describing it in its natural proportions. The portion which has been contributed to the book by Professor J. W. Gibbs, relating chiefly to the derivation of words, well sustains the reputation of that learned philologist ; but as this portion almost necessarily takes the form of a catalogue, we have some doubts whether it might not have been more profitably included in a dictionary. Learned etymological discussions are serviceable only to a small class of scholars ; the pupil of a common school, or even an undergraduate in college, would be frightened by them. The author also acknowledges that he is under large obligations to Dr. Latham, of London University, whose labors in this department are well known and highly appreciated. Hav-

ing freely incorporated into his work whatever he found most valuable and consonant with his purpose in the writings of many erudite philologists, logicians, and grammarians, nearly every student can derive some profit and information from his pages ; so that we can heartily commend them, for examination at least, to teachers and learners.

3. *Poems*, by H. W. PARKER. Auburn: James M. Alden. 1850. 12mo. pp. 238.

BEFORE we received his volume, we had never heard of Mr. Parker ; but having subjected the book to a tolerably thorough *extispicium*, we feel safe in auguring that we shall hear of him again. We are inclined to deal gently with the earlier essays of song. A first volume, like a first love, is a tender experience, which a man can have only once. It is a venture watched by one pair of eyes, at least, with nervous solicitude. Like the taper-freighted bark of the Hindoo maiden, it trusts itself to the current of the time ; and we would not endanger it by a single ripple of adverse criticism. At a certain period, our American youth of both sexes pass through an eruption of verse, more or less violent, as inevitably as through measles or scarlatina. In such cases, we doubt the safety of treatment by cold water. We should rather be inclined to try a homœopathic regimen ; and, trusting that *similia similibus curantur*, would put the patient upon a rigid course of other first volumes.

The richer veins of poetry do not always crop out upon the surface. There must be tough digging, and a getting down into the depths to come at them. But where we find fancy and imagination scattered as profusely as in the pages of Mr. Parker, we may feel quite safe in recommending the sinking of a shaft.

We find in this book proofs of an unconscious strength, and a difficult ease of expression, (for the best things are not in the gift of luck, but of luck's master, endeavor,) which promise much. The poems, too, have an indigenous flavor, as if they had caught the direct rays of the American sun, without the intervention of glass. Mr. Parker's images and illustrations are drawn from things about him, which he has seen, not dreamed of ; and he presses the wine of poetry from the native grape.

The chief defect of the author lies in his not allowing enough weight to *probability* in the choice of his fancies. It is not a